

KEY WEST THE SLEEPY

Galvanized Into Life By the Naval Rendezvous.

ITS THREE-PART POPULACE

Not a Wholesome Place For Spaniards Just Now.

Key West, Fla., May 2.—Two months ago Key West was a small dot on the map. Today it is the most important naval station in the United States, with a fleet of twenty-five war ships rendezvousing in the harbor.

Key West is the small bit of Uncle Sam's territory nearest Cuba—the one town that does not seem to belong to the United States. In fact, Key West people themselves are apparently just beginning to realize the fact that they are United States people.

The fleet has been a godsend in more ways than one, for it has given such a roused it from the dead past and inspired it with the hope of a future. One would have to search the north, state by state, to find a town so lacking in enterprise and on the whole so unattractive as this heretofore sleepy old place.

SHORT ON ENERGY.
It has been said that almost everything could be raised in Key West except energy, and there is good ground for that statement. In this semi-tropical climate a desert could blossom as the rose if the population desired it. But the population is indifferent, and nature struggles on alone, though not wholly discouraged, but showing here and there in blossoming trees and vines what she might accomplish under more favorable auspices.

The key, or island, on which the city of Key West is situated is about six miles in greatest length and two miles wide, with a low coast line—so low that the spring tides flood the streets nearest the sea—affording annual diversion to the people in the novelty of small boat navigation about town.

Key West is an old place and more than looks its actual age. The straggling, unpaved streets, with all sorts and conditions of architecture, are in striking contrast to up-to-date towns in the north and also in some of the southern states.

NO BUSINESS CENTER.
Key West has a population of 20,000, but it has no business center. Shops of every description are scattered among private residences from one end of a street to the other. While there are many private houses with beautiful piazzas, all look deserted during the day. From sunrise until sunset every door blind and window is closed, and no sign of life or occupation is visible. And why? Oh, simply to keep out the dust. Dust is the only thing that flourishes in Key West, and may be depended on, for it is here every day in the week, and always in unlimited quantity. The town makes no attempt to interfere with the dust or check it, though it would be an easy public enterprise to use water on the streets.

One would suppose that in a town of 20,000 people there would be sufficient public spirit to cope with a water cart street sprinkler. But up to the present time no step has been taken in this direction, and the annual sprinkler is the rainy season, for while this Key West population is now growing, this coral dust is like fine wind-blown sand. It penetrates every crevice and invisible crack, covers everything in the house and out, makes every leaf and flower look dingy and discolored. There is no security of water for all cleaning and sanitary uses—like whole sea and wells. But there is no sewerage, no modern sanitary methods to keep a town of 20,000 clean and healthy.

WATER FROM CISTERNS.
The water supply for household or other purposes is from cisterns, and cisterns are now running low, making it necessary to exercise much economy, for in the event of a water famine for more than a few days, the city would be in a predicament. And yet there can be no other conclusion. Very few houses have bathrooms. Not to have bathrooms is the rule, and on the whole island there is not a public bathing beach—absolutely no proper accommodations or facilities for sea-bathing.

As I have already said, nature does her part and more. But the odds are against her. Here is water for the finest sea bathing, and almost the year round, for the mercury seldom falls below 60 degrees even in the winter months. But so far as sea bathing contributes to the health, comfort and cleanliness of the population, Key West might as well be in the center of a big western prairie rather than an island in the sea. The dusty streets are the only playground for children, and the only playground for the people. There is not a spot anywhere with a tree, bush or flower affording an open air resort for the people—no shade trees along the streets—though it need not be added that trees and all flowering shrubs and vines would grow here with tropical force and luxuriance. The courthouse stands in a large square.



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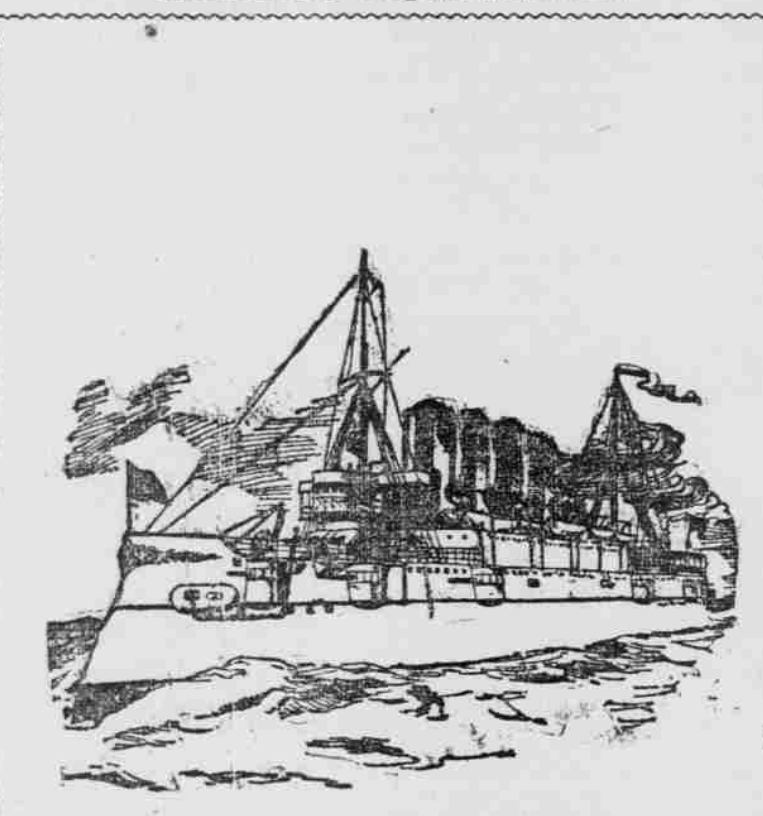
of ground most favorably located for a park. But it seems never to have occurred to the mayor and council that it would be the easiest thing in the world to transform this bare, unattractive waste into a pretty park with shade trees and flowers. As it is, an iron fence incloses the square; there is not a tree or bush within; nobody ever goes near it, and children and everybody else take to the streets, with all the dirt, and rickety sidewalks.

There is an electric light plant in Key West, quite inadequate to light the town, and therefore no pretense is made to light the streets except just at the wharves. Also there is a dilapidated carriage service, but inexpensive, and the most easy-going street car lines, with mules, that it is possible to imagine flourishing within the jurisdiction of the United States. The stranger, however, unconsciously says: "Overt nine United States," as if on foreign soil. Nethertheless carriage nor street car service has yet been affected by "war prices," and one may ride almost round the island by street car for 5 cents, and make a single trip to any part of the town by carriage for 10 cents. The question of speed is not involved, but safety can be counted on as pretty certain.

TRIP ON A CAR.
I went out the other day in the street car, and for some distance was the only passenger. The conductor sat on the rear seat—conductors here have much time to occupy the rear seat—the driver sat down on the front seat, threw the reins down the crank of the brake, and soon fell asleep. The mules jogged on at a gentle trot, turned out if it stopped and waited for the passing car, close at hand. I thought the passing car would disturb the

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ASIATIC SQUADRON.



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Lieutenant T. M. Drumby, flag lieutenant.

Ensign H. H. Caldwell, secretary.

OLYMPIA, FLAGSHIP.

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Lieutenant Commander, S. C. Palma.

Lieutenants, G. G. Atkins, V. S. Nelson, G. S. Morgan, W. G. Miller, S. M. Strite.

Ensigns, M. M. Taylor, F. B. Upham, W. P. Scott, A. G. Cavanaugh.

Medical Inspector, A. F. Price.

P. A. surgeon, J. E. Page.

Assistant surgeon, C. P. Kindelberger.

Pay Inspector, D. A. Smith.

Chief engineer, J. Entwistle.

Assistant engineers, E. H. De Lacy, J. F. Marshall.

Chief clerk, J. B. Fraser.

Captain of marines, W. F. Biddle.

Gunner, L. J. G. Kuhlwein.

Carpenter, W. Macdonald.

Acting boatswain, E. J. Norcott.

U. S. S. RALPH.

Captain, J. B. Coghlan.

Lieutenant Commander, F. Singer.

Lieutenants, W. Winde, B. Tappan, H. Rodman, C. B. Morgan.

Ensigns, F. L. Chadwick, P. Babin.

Surgeon, F. H. Marteller.

Assistant surgeon, D. N. Carpenter.

P. A. paymaster, S. R. Heap.

Chief engineer, F. H. Bailey.

P. A. engineer, A. S. Halstead.

Assistant engineer, J. R. Brady.

First lieutenant of marines, T. C. Treawell.

U. S. S. BOSTON.

Captain, F. Wildes.

Lieutenant, J. Gibson, W. L. Howard.

Ensigns, S. S. Robinson, L. H. Everhart, J. S. Dorrance.

Surgeon, M. H. Crawford.

Assistant surgeon, B. S. Blakeman.

Paymaster, J. R. Martin.

drivers' slumbers. But it did not. The car rumbled by, the mules started promptly, crossed over on the main track, resumed their former little jog-trot, and the driver slept on peacefully as ever. I turned to the conductor and remarked: "Your mules appear to be well trained."

With considerable pride in his tone he replied: "Yes. They mules have been on this road Key West is 15 years."

Of course Key West is too small for farming. But there is neither, in a small way, vegetable gardens nor fruit orchards. All such supplies are shipped over—orange, not from Florida groves, but from California. The nearest approach to "rural districts" are open lots or pastures, where herds of goats graze on what seems to be chiefly cactus plants. When I expressed some doubt about the prickly pear for grazing purposes, a small black boy said reassuringly: "Oh—a goat—he eat anything."

Not only does Key West exist eat "anything," but he thrives on the pastures, and is a sleek little creature, who looks really better fed than Key West horses and mules subsisting on imported hay and grain.

PAITH SUPREME.
Key West people are essentially a people of faith. They do not reason on lines of cause and effect, therefore are not concerned about street cleaning or other sanitary measures. They know the natural advantages of their little island and have entire faith in sea breezes as a disinfectant, believing the salt air blowing always around them will maintain the health of the town, without effort or precaution on their part. They tell you that all the

ills flesh is heir to are brought from some "other part." It is difficult for northern people to understand the apathy and shiftless disregard for progress, everywhere apparent, when the place could be easily made a "thing of beauty and joy forever."

THE HOPELESS PHASE.
The change in the atmosphere was quick and marvelous. The very quiet of anxious waiting and tension of suspense had been oppressive. People went to daily work or to enforced idleness alike, as if under the gloom of a heavy, lowering cloud. Suddenly the cloud lifted, broke, vanished, and such a sunlight as never before fell upon the Cubans in Key West. Every face was bright with smiling hope—every face that had been hard and set for weeks past were now radiant with the new light. It could not be described—this sudden uplifting and buoyancy of spirit. It was in the air, in the blue sky, in every voice. Men on the streets, grave and old, embraced, throwing their arms about each other with impulsive rejoicing. Men at work putting up flags would stop a moment to embrace, talking and laughing of Cuba libre. It was a general holiday—schools dismissed and workshops closed.

It was not long before the Cuban band was out to serenade Capt. Forsyth, commander of the navy station, and the flags are still flying, besides yards of sun-mayor, a young physician of Key West, whose father and grandfather had in turn held the office before him. The band started from the Jose Martí club house, first playing there in memory of Martí, whose riots.

THE DISTINGUISHED LEADER.
The procession was led by Manuel Govin, a cousin of Senor Govin in the autonomist cabinet in Havana. But it was not this relationship that added interest. It was the tragedy that added interest. It was his tragedy a year ago, when Manuel Govin's young brother went to Cuba, a newspaper correspondent, and was shot by Spanish soldiers in refusing to the last to shout "Viva Espana" in the confusion on which they offered to spare his life. Young Govin died with "Cuba libre" on his lips. Remembering this, it was not strange that the leader of the procession was greeted with sympathetic cheers along the streets. The death is sincerely mourned by all Cuban patriots in Key West.

The following evening, after receiving news of the president's signature to the resolutions, there was a big torchlight parade to ratify the president's action. American and Cuban flags waved in pairs; there were many transparencies inscribed to America as to Cuba, and the band played among other American airs "The Star Spangled Banner" and "Dixie." Above the music and cheers for Cuba libre were cheers for the United States, and higher and more vigorous than all was the shout of the small boy shouting, "Viva Mr. McKinley!" "Viva Mr. McKinley!" San Carlos hall was quite too small for the crowds to hear the speeches both in Spanish and English, and there was the greatest enthusiasm all around. But throughout the days of rejoicing perfect order prevailed, and there was the entire absence of all noisy or boisterous demonstration.

Whenever and wherever crowds gathered a woman could pass with the crowd instantaneously falling back with the respectful deference always shown to women in Key West, especially strangers. At the beginning of the celebration a telegram was sent to the president of the United States with the offer of 1,000 Key West Cuban volunteers, and it was Manuel Govin who asked that he be permitted to lead them in the field. One has only to look in the man's face to see strength and force of character, courage and leadership. Govin expressed the general sentiment among Cubans when he said: "We Cubans are grateful to America and will prove it."

In regard to his cousin in the autonomist cabinet, Senor Govin said: "He is my second cousin and not so long ago he was in full sympathy with me. He was a Cuban and the last time he passed through Key West he contributed money to help the insurgents in the field. No doubt he had a motive for the change. But he had no more faith in autonomy than we have. It is not probable that the autonomists have taken any steps to treat with the insurgents as reported. It would lead to no result, for the insurgents, as well as Spain well know, will accept nothing short of independence. But it would gain time, and that is always the policy of Spain—to gain time. This has been Spain's policy all along with the United States."

A LEADING CUBAN.
Like many Cubans in Key West, Manuel Govin could best serve the cause by personal influence and money contributions to the support of the insurgents. He is regarded as the leading Cuban here. He speaks English as fluently as Spanish and has the advantage of European travel. His wife also speaks English well and is an accomplished woman—tall and slender, with large, dark eyes and Spanish type of face.

Cuban women are intensely patriotic. There is no sacrifice they will not make and cheerfully endure in any hardships for Cuba libre. It is as nothing that women living in ease and luxury two years ago are now without shoes on their feet, go out after midnight because they cannot face the day in their tatters and are absolutely dependent for the food that keeps them alive on charity from the United States. The poor, the poor, the poor—who has been started out of all pride that suffers most. It is the man or woman of the better class, reduced to want and begging for bread by the loss of everything. And yet there are no complaints. Women and young girls work for Cuba libre—babies in arms are tiny Cuban flags—it is the spirit everywhere. One of the most active patriotic young girls in Key West is a beautiful Cuban—the daughter of the pastor of the Cuban Protestant Mission church.

Rev. Denison of the Protestant church (Continued on Eighth Page.)

IN ACTIVE SERVICE.
And every able bodied man of service age is enrolled for the field in the war between the United States and Spain, when all will be equipped with arms and ammunition, which they have not been able to obtain themselves. Besides active service in the field those unfit for such duty by age or other reason have offered their service for garrison work here, or any available service in the town. The opportunity they have waited for has come and they are ready for action.

For more than a week all Cuban Key West has been effecting with patriotic demonstration. It began the day the news was received from Washington of the action of congress. Ten minutes after the dispatch came the whole town was alive—the streets thronged with men, women and children, all with flags, the American colors leading the Cuban star. The town had been waving with flags before, hundreds everywhere. But in almost less time than it takes to tell it hundreds more were hung to the breeze. From every house, great and small, the flags are still flying, besides yards of bunting thrown over balconies and piazzas.

rails. Every carriage driver, however shabby his vehicle, had it decked with flags, and every horse's head kept the little flag on its waving—seven the mules on the street held their own in the general flag decoration.

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J. D. HOUSTON, Attorney at Law, 305 Sedgwick.

A. J. MYATT, Attorney at Law, 209 North Main Street, Wichita.

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THOS. G. WILSON, Lawyer, 251 North Main Street. Telephone 135.

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STATEMENT OF THE CONDITION OF THE BANK OF COMMERCE, WICHITA, KAN., at the close of business March 31st, 1898.

ASSETS.

Capital stock - \$100,000.00

Surplus and Undivided Profits - 2,500.00

Net profits - 1,250.00

Deposits - 2,500.00

LIABILITIES.

Bills receivable - 10,000.00

Notes and Bonds - 10,000.00

Furniture and fixtures - 1,000.00